

<921> Needs assessment and deployment planning with a focus on Tribal community anchor institutions;

Range Telephone made numerous attempts in 2012 to have meetings with the Northern Cheyenne Tribe and the Crow Tribe to discuss the needs assessment and deployment planning on Tribal community anchor institutions. An account of these meeting is listed below:

#### Tribal Council Meeting

May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2012

9:30 AM

Allen Wetherelt, Operations Manager for Range Telephone Cooperative, Inc. called and scheduled an informational exchange meeting with Leroy Spang, Northern Cheyenne Tribal Council President for May 16, 2012. He arrived promptly at 9:30 A.M. with donuts in hand to share as a good will offering for our first scheduled meeting. Even though the receptionist showed the meeting on the calendar, both the Tribal President and Tribal Vice President were gone to a meeting in Billings. Allen met with Jule Sprang and George Scalpcrane, who were the council representatives for the day but both were unaware of a scheduled meeting. Allen shared with them the purpose of my visit being that as part of the Broadband reform telecommunications providers such as Range Telephone are required to work with Federal, State, and local government entities to address their needs of broadband service. We shared with them that as part of the order, Range needs to try and provide a minimum of 4 Meg downstream and 1 Meg upstream broadband service to every customer.

Allen then asked George and Jule what the specific needs are of the tribal businesses. They did not know what the specific needs of each of the businesses would be and asked that we contact them ourselves. Allen shared with them that Range was already providing DSL, Ethernet, and/or T-1 service to most of the businesses now. At the Lama Deer School district, we have been working with the "E" rate program to provide their needs for the past several years.

Allen asked one last time if George or Jule could think of any other needs that were needed on the reservation and they asked if Range Telephone could provide or help provide Cellular phone service. We do not currently offer Cellular phone service directly but that we do have a re-sale service agreement with Verizon Cellular. We provide a lot of the fiber optic cable back haul services for Verizon and AT&T. George and Jule did mention that they already had a couple of people in house working on a Cellular wireless solution for the reservation and that it might be beneficial for me to get in contact with them.

The final topic discussed was a request to provide them information on the total number of locations connected by Range Telephone and the total number of locations with service. Our meeting concluded at approximately 10:30 AM.

Allen Wetherelt

Second meeting attempt;

**From:** Allen Wetherelt [allen@rangetel.coop]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 26, 2012 4:51 PM  
**To:** 'wallace@cheyennation.com'  
**Cc:** 'Rob Stephens'; 'Allen Wetherelt (allen.wetherelt@rangetel.coop)'  
**Subject:** meeting with tribe  
**Attachments:** FCC Tribal Letter.pdf; Range Tribal Letter.pdf; Tribal agenda meeting.pdf  
  
**Importance:** High

To whom it may concern;

Range Telephone would like to schedule a meeting with the Tribal President Leroy Spang and Vice President Joe Fox Jr. Attached is the form letter from your website "Request to schedule an appointment with the tribal administration staff" and a "FCC Notice" and a letter from Range Telephone requesting a meeting to address the issues and topics contained in the FCC notice as well as Range's reconstruction plans of the fire damaged telecommunication systems on the reservation and the possible purchase of the Lame Deer cable TV system.

Thanks, Allen Wetherelt

Operations Manager

Range Telephone Coop. Inc.

4063472843

4063511022

[allen@rangetel.coop](mailto:allen@rangetel.coop)

Third meeting attempt;

October 31, 2012

### Montana Broadband 2012 Tribal Summit

Robin Stephens, CEO, of Range Telephone and I (Allen Wetherelt), Operations Manager for Range Telephone, attended the Montana Broadband 2012 Tribal Summit in Great Falls held on October 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> 2012. We drove to the meeting which was a 560 mile round trip.

It was fairly informative meeting, but none of the representatives that we wanted to see were in attendance from the tribal areas that we serve, being the Northern Cheyenne and Crow reservations. The meeting was advertised as a meeting with all the reservation representatives and interested businesses.

Tracy Morris of the Chickasaw Nation, Loris Taylor of the Hopi Nation, and Valerie Fast Horse from the Coeur D'Alene Tribe presented very good information as to how broadband and technology is being used to enhance the lives of members on the reservations as well as reach out to ones that have left the reservation.

Lesa Evers who is the Director of Indian Affairs for the State of Montana provided a good outline of the perception of the Native American community's access to broadband services. Quinn Ness Bureau Chief for the State of Montana Public Safety Services Bureau provided an overview of the broadband program from both the federal and state perspective. He outlined the federal requirements of cooperation for both the tribal entities and service providers. Quinn also provided information on the broadband mapping project that had taken place in 2011 and showed the maps of broadband access throughout the state of Montana.

We realize that the Native American communities need broadband service just like all of our other non Native American communities. Some of the issues that we had hope would be addressed in this meeting such as obtaining rights of way on tribal lands in a timely manner, how to get Native American representatives to schedule and hold meetings with us to discuss issues outlined within the federal broadband order, and so on were not addressed.

No additional meeting date was set but Robin Stephens, CEO of Range Telephone has committed that we will be in attendance once a future date is set.

Range Telephone Cooperative, Inc. is a cooperative and the customers we serve on the tribal reservations are owners with all the other non- tribal members.

Allen Wetherelt

Operations Manager

Fourth meeting attempt;

**From:** Melissa Lonebear [mlonebear@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, December 17, 2012 3:37 PM  
**To:** Allen Wetherelt  
**Subject:** Re: Meeting with President John Robinson

I will forward your e-mail to the Lead Advisor to President Robinson. Her name is Desi Small-Rodriguez. Also, I will give your information to our Economic Development Committee Chairman, Tracy Robinson.

**From:** Allen Wetherelt <[allen@rangetel.coop](mailto:allen@rangetel.coop)>  
**To:** "mlonebear@yahoo.com" <[mlonebear@yahoo.com](mailto:mlonebear@yahoo.com)>  
**Cc:** "Allen Wetherelt ([allen.wetherelt@rangetel.coop](mailto:allen.wetherelt@rangetel.coop))" <[allen.wetherelt@rangetel.coop](mailto:allen.wetherelt@rangetel.coop)>; 'Rob Stephens' <[rob.stephens@rangetel.coop](mailto:rob.stephens@rangetel.coop)>  
**Sent:** Monday, December 17, 2012 2:39 PM  
**Subject:** Meeting with President John Robinson

Melissa;

Hi Melissa my name Allen Wetherelt and I work for Range Telephone. Rob Stephens and I would like to schedule a meeting with newly elected President John Robinson to discuss providing higher speed internet service throughout all of the reservation. Could you provide us some information as to how you would like to proceed for setting up such a meeting?

Thanks, Allen Wetherelt

Operations Manager

Range Telephone Coop. Inc.

[allen@rangetel.coop](mailto:allen@rangetel.coop)

406-347-2843 office

406-351-1022 cell

I was encouraged that I received an email back from Melissa but have not been able to contact these individuals listed in her email nor have any of them contacted me.

We have also tried to meet with the Crow Reservation Tribal members, but once again with no luck. We would like to meet with them in a joint meeting with Nemont Telephone Cooperative, Inc., which also serves on the Crow Reservation.

Both reservations have gone thru complete over hauls in the tribal leadership. I am sure they will be getting back to us at sometime in the future but right now they have more important things to resolve than having a meeting with their telecommunications/broadband providers.

Robin Stephens, CEO, also sent two letters to the Northern Cheyenne Tribal Council, one on September 26, 2012 and one on December 13, 2012. Copies of those letters are enclosed as well.

Robin Stephens, CEO, also sent a letter to the Crow Reservation Tribal Council, on December 13, 2012, and a copy of it is enclosed too.

Range Telephone serves the entire Northern Cheyenne Reservation.

Range Telephone only serves 33 members on the Crow Reservation so that is why the majority of our efforts are with the Northern Cheyenne Reservation.

<922> Feasibility and sustainability planning;

Range Telephone provides service to the entire Northern Cheyenne reservation and small portion of the rural area of the Crow reservation. Range Telephone has fiber optics to our major service area locations throughout the reservation that connects north and south to location hubs providing

connectivity to the World Wide Web. Engineering plans and designs are being implemented for upgrades throughout the reservation to provide 4/1 broadband service. Range is in the process of upgrading switching equipment for VOIP service and upgrading broadband equipment capable of providing FTTH service with broadband speeds well in excess of the 4/1 minimum requirement. Range is committed to provide the minimum broadband service of 4/1 to any of our customers within the scope of a reasonable request.

<923> Marketing services in a culturally sensitive manner;

Range Telephone advertises in the local paper called "A Cheyenne Voice". Our marketing department has held customer appreciation tailgate parties at football and basketball games providing food, give a ways, and door prizes. Range Telephone annually offers an exclusive \$1500 scholarship to a Native American student and additionally made \$1400 of contributions to other organizations throughout the reservations.

<924> Compliance with Right of way processes

Northern Cheyenne- Work with Darryl Sanchez and Maryanne Bearcomesout from the Lane Deer Bureau of Indian Affairs Realty Office to process Rights Of Way and Service Line Agreements across Tribal and Allotted land. Range Engineers field stake, survey, pursue allottee signatures and submit the appropriate application forms for right of way. We work closely with customers and the BIA on the reservation to get new applicants telecommunications services. Projects are completed with the Northern Cheyenne office in Lane Deer on a regular basis.

Crow Indian Reservation- Work with the Realty Office from the Crow Agency Bureau of Indian Affairs to process Rights of way across Tribal and Allotted land. Range Engineers field stake, survey, pursue allottee signatures and submit the appropriate application forms for right of way. We work closely with customers and the BIA on the reservation to get new applicants telecommunications services.

<925> Compliance with Land use permitting requirements

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<926> Compliance with Facilities Siting rules;

Range Telephone is sensitive to this issue and works with the tribal authorities and as a RUS borrower complies with all federal regulations dealing with archeology studies to help protect and preserve the

Native American heritage. As part of Range Telephone construction practices we have an archeology study done on all RUS construction project.

<927> Compliance with Environmental Review processes;

Range Telephone is sensitive to this issue and works with the tribal authorities and as a RUS borrower complies with all federal regulations dealing with archeology studies to help protect and preserve the Native American heritage. As part of Range Telephone construction practices we have an archeology study done on all RUS construction project.

<928> Compliance with cultural Preservation review processes;

Range Telephone is sensitive to this issue and works with the tribal authorities and as a RUS borrower complies with all federal regulations dealing with archeology studies to help protect and preserving the Native American heritage. As part of Range Telephone construction practices we have an archeology study done on all RUS construction project.

<929> Compliance with Tribal Business and Licensing requirements;

Range Telephone annually provides Tribal Work Permits for all of our plant department employees. We require any contractor or sub-contractor that is done work for Range Telephone purchase a Tribal Work Permit.

## **Allen Wetherelt**

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**Subject:** Allen - Meeting Tribal Council Lane Deer

**Start:** Wed 5/16/2012 9:30 AM  
**End:** Wed 5/16/2012 12:00 PM

**Recurrence:** (none)

**Organizer:** Allen Wetherelt